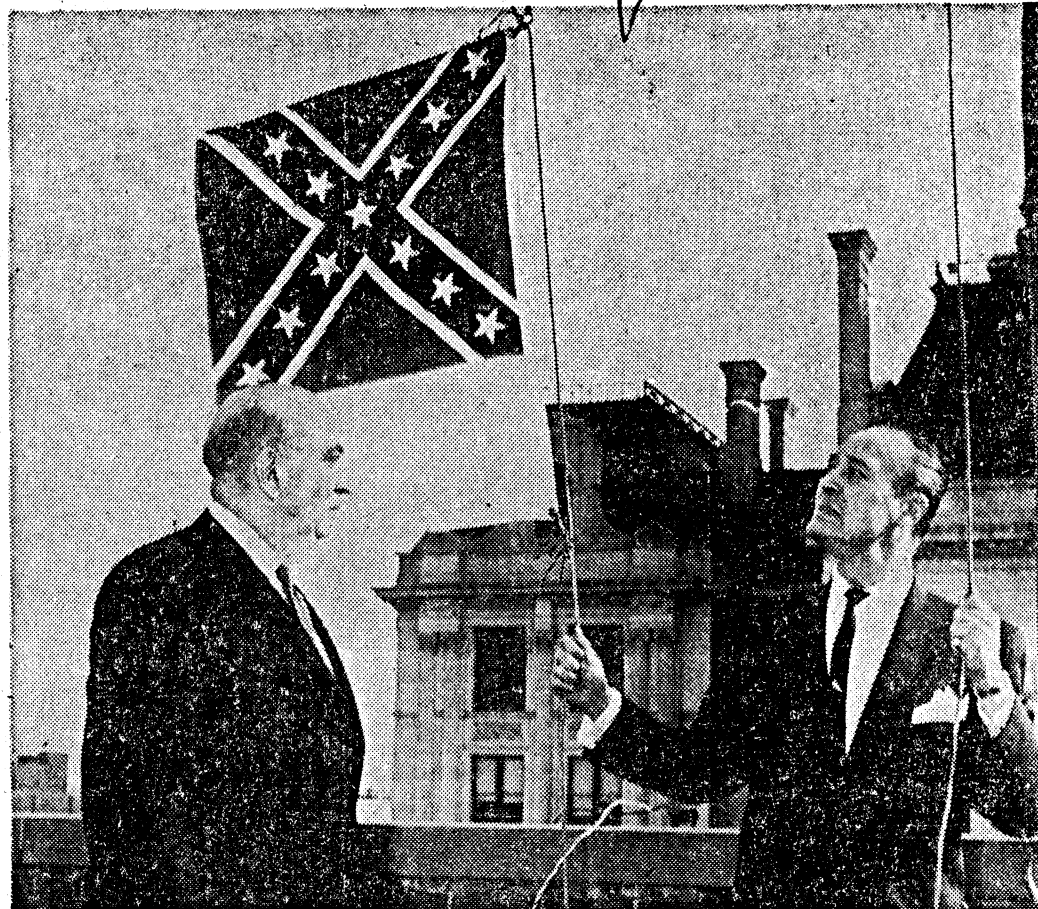


WILLIAMS, WALTER



**TERRE HAUTE HONORS CIVIL WAR VETERAN**—A red, white and blue Civil War flag was flown at halfmast over the City Hall building Tuesday as the community paid its respects to Civil War veteran Walter Williams who died Saturday at Houston, Tex. The flag, which is the property of Dick Jewell, research chemist at Commercial Solvents, will be taken down Wednesday. Williams, who was 117 years old, was the last survivor of the five million members of the Blue and Gray who took part in the war between the states. T-12-22

REFERENCE  
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

# Do You Know These Soldiers?

CIVIL WAR



Do you know them? This is a replica of an old daguerreotype, now in possession of Noah W. Rudisel of 1516 Crawford street. The original picture was found by Rudisel beneath the home where he now resides.

The photograph was enclosed in a folder of what seemed to be varnished leather, richly embossed. Holding the glass was a copper etched frame and beneath the glass a plate of gold etching. The entire relic is in good condition.

Rudisel is seeking to learn the identity of the two men shown in the photograph. Both men are wearing uniforms and one is holding a sword over his right shoulder.

One expert on things photographic said that process was what was called an "ambertype" in the old days. Dr. F. E. D'Enbeau, familiar with the subject, said that the picture is of two Confederate soldiers.

STATE OF INDIANA  
REFERENCE  
DIVISION

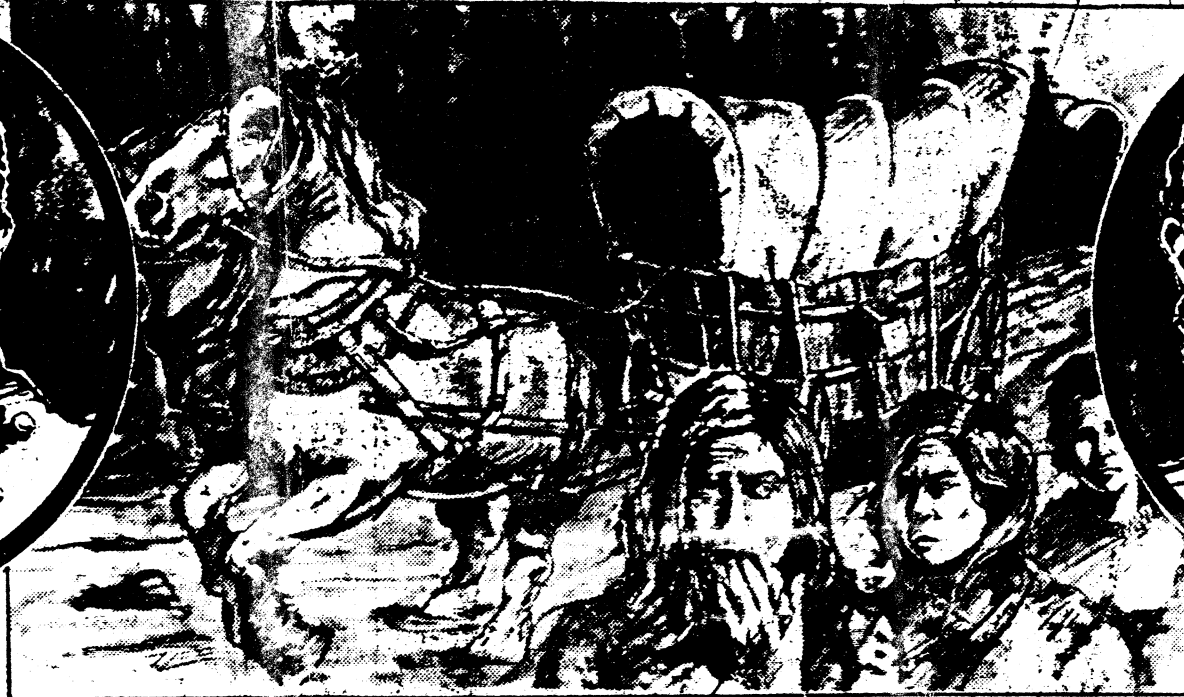
VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Civil War Genealogy File



Gen. William T. Sherman



TIM LEE/Staff



Gen. Kenner Garrard

# Mystery of the Roswell women

**Fate unknown  
after Sherman  
sent them north**

By Webb Garrison

In one of the least-known incidents of the Civil War, Gen. William T. Sherman angrily deported to the North several hundred helpless women and their children from the little Fulton County mill village of Roswell.

Sherman, then in Cobb County preparing for the final assault on Atlanta in the summer of 1864, was angered at what the Roswell women did for a living. They worked

*Webb Garrison is a regular contributor to Dixie Living. His latest book is "Behind the Headlines."*

in the village's textile mills.

When news slowly spread of the forced removal, there was disbelief. New York's Commercial Advertiser newspaper called the affair "a frightful disgrace," adding a hope that the first account would prove to be untrue.

But true it was. Sherman's ambition was to rip Georgia apart and fatally wound the Confederacy. What became of the 350 to 400 women has remained a mystery.

On July 4, 1864, Northern and Southern forces clashed in vigorous combat at Ruff's Station, now known as Smyrna. The slow grinding by Sherman toward Atlanta was

approaching its finality.

Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston had spent weeks fortifying high bluffs along the Chattahoochee River. They constituted the most formidable works between Resaca and Atlanta. Even Sherman knew that hasty frontal attack would be futile. Until troops could be moved across the river in great numbers, there was no way by which to strike directly at Atlanta.

Sherman sent troops to find places where the Chattahoochee could be crossed. Included was an order for an Ohio cavalry general, Kenner Garrard, to sweep eastward and secure the bridge crossing the Chattahoochee near Roswell. It would lead to the unusually harsh treatment of several hundred women who were employed in Roswell.

Earlier, Sherman had been angered at

Garrard's slow moving calvary and was still fuming at the federal losses sustained at Kennesaw Mountain.

When Garrard asked what he should do with the town of Roswell, Sherman snapped:

"Don't make a damned bit of difference. So you get out of here, and go for rebels."

Garrard, an 1851 West Point graduate, sent his advance column ahead, reaching Roswell on July 5. The remainder of his 3,000 mounted troops followed the next day.

It was no great surprise to Garrard to learn that a small force of Confederates, falling back toward Atlanta, had burned the Chattahoochee River bridge as they retreated. There still remained the village, which Garrard knew little about.

See ROSWELL

4F

# Roswell

FROM 1F

Roswell owed its existence to the Shallow Ford crossed by the old Hightower Trail in days before white men gained control of the region. Today's Shallowford Road in Atlanta perpetuates the geographical title. Garrard's men secured the ford, simultaneously taking stock of the assets of the captured town.

To Garrard's complete surprise, he found that the town he'd captured was a major manufacturing center — where most of the employees were women.

Roswell King, a coastal plantation owner, had discovered in 1835 that Vickery Creek could be dammed in such fashion that it would provide abundant water power. He built a 30-foot dam and waterfall, with a wooden millrace, and within three years had Roswell Mills in operation.

By 1850, King's operation required five bales of cotton a day for production of shirting, yarn, and the coarse, heavy cloth called osnaburg. In the decade before the war, about 150 women worked in the mills 11 hours a day, six days a week.

The fighting between North and South brought new and imperative demand for cloth. No Georgia community was better prepared to meet that need than was Roswell.

By 1864, it had two cotton mills and one woolen mill plus a sturdy two-story apartment dwelling for workers.

Garrard and his men burned all three mills.

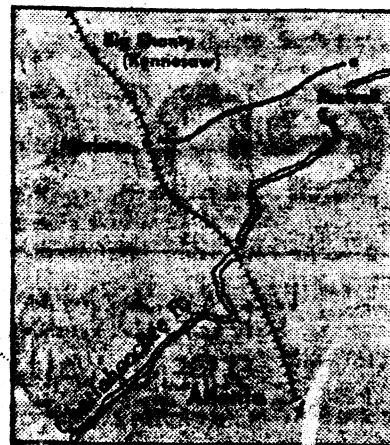
That night, he reported to Sherman. One of the cotton mills, said he, was equipped with 216 looms. All had been working at capacity "making cloth, bread and rope for the rebels." Several thousand yards of cloth were confiscated.

He has been momentarily puzzled



Photo Courtesy of Atlanta Historical Society

**DURING THE CIVIL WAR:** The Roswell mill was the center of controversy.



Library arrests — then to deport rebels

commander, Col. A.O. Miller ordered an entire brigade to move a mile north of town.

Soon, Sherman's deportation order began to be implemented. Precisely how many women were to be treated as traitors and sent to the North, no one knows. Most estimates range between 350 and 400; one account says that two of the female workers were black.

During a period of about 72 hours, the Roswell women and some of their children were sent about 16 miles to Marietta. They followed the approximate route of present-day Georgia Highway 120.

The anguish must have been severe. Union Capt. David P. Con-

have ordered Gen. Webster at Nashville to dispose of them. They will be sent to Indiana."

Brief accounts in Nashville newspapers, supplemented by reports from Kentucky and Indiana, suggested that most or all women who'd incurred Sherman's wrath by making cloth for rebels reached a northern city.

On July 21, the New Albany, Indiana, Daily Ledger reported: "The train which arrived at Louisville from Nashville last evening brought up from the South 249 women and children, who are sent by order of General Sherman, to be transferred north of the Ohio River." There are no clear accounts of why the num-

bered on box cars and sent north.

In 1934, a man named Walter Alonzo Sexton wrote the DeKalb County Health Department. Seeking evidence for a birth certificate, he said he was an infant when Union soldiers forced his family to leave Decatur and travel by train northward, eventually into the heartland of Indiana.

"At every station and town," he wrote, "the freight dropped off a number of refugees, according to the population. We were put off at the little town of Shelbyville. Our first shelter was an empty warehouse with 12 other families. All in town flocked to see us. Employment was soon provided for all."

No one knows how many thousands of Georgians were forcibly resettled in the North. In the case of the Roswell women and children, it was merely a nearly forgotten sidelight to brutal civil war. Armies were in collision. Cities were being burned. Generals on both sides were being shot from the saddle. Thousands of men were dying, and tens of thousands were receiving battlefield wounds.

Under such circumstances, there was little time or writing materials with which to record the movements of obscure refugees.

The Roswell Historical Society has no information about them. Neither does the Georgia State Archives, the University of Georgia Libraries or the Atlanta Historical Society. The Indiana State Library in Indianapolis has a few newspaper accounts of arrivals in the state, but no information concerning subsequent events.

Twenty years after the mass deportation, editors of the Confederate Veteran magazine guessed that "few if any of these poor women ever saw their native soil again." In 1932, Judge Lewis Russell, an uncle

of U.S. Sen. Richard B. Russell, investigated the puzzle but found no answers.

Is it possible in the turmoil of war, that several hundred Georgian women could have vanished without a trace?

*Do you have, or know someone who has, a letter, a diary segment, a family Bible or an old newspaper clipping that will throw light on the fate of the Roswell women? Copies will be appreciated — along with "oral history" from family or community sources. Write Webb Garrison, Dixie Living, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, P.O. Box 4689, Atlanta, Ga. 30302.*



or cloth were confiscated.

He has been momentarily puzzled by the woolen mill, he wrote. Though it looked much like other Roswell structures, he found a French flag flying over it. After consideration he decided that the flag was a rebel ruse, so he ignored the possibility of an international incident and ordered the mill below the flag to be destroyed, too. There is some evidence that a French businessman had a small financial interest in the mill, but the flag was merely a ploy.

On July 7 near the Chattahoochee, Sherman received Garrard's report. He then told his subordinate: "I had no idea that the factories at Roswell remained in operation." He then gave his total approval to the burning of the factories, which he had not ordered.

But the use of the French flag at Roswell triggered an outburst of the famous Sherman temper. "You will arrest the owners and employees (of all the factories) and send them under guard, charged with treason, to Marietta," he ordered.

"I will see as to any man in America hoisting the French flag and then devoting his labor and capital in supplying armies in open hostility to our government. Should you, under the impulse of anger hang the wretch, I approve the act beforehand."

During the previous month, Sherman's fury at "rebel tricks" in northwest Georgia had mounted. Seeking to protect his railroad lines from raiders, he had requested from Washington permission to make ar-

bitrary arrests — then to deport rebels "to Lower California or even to Central America." Sherman declared he could not and would not tolerate guerillas.

U.S. Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton had not endorsed the deportation scheme, and flying the French flag in Roswell couldn't be called an act of guerilla war. Yet it provided the excuse Sherman had been seeking. In a long telegram, Sherman ordered Garrard to "arrest all people, male and female, connected with those factories, no matter what the clamor, and let them foot it, under guard, to Marietta, whence I will send them by (rail) cars to the North. The poor women will make a howl. Let them take their children and clothing, provided they have the means of hauling or you can spare them."

Meanwhile in Roswell, Union Gen. Grenville Dodge — a railroad surveyor and engineer for whom Dodge City was later named — was busy superintending an attempt to rebuild the Chattahoochee River bridge with lumber salvaged from demolished factories.

Also in Roswell, Garrard celebrated the renewal of cordial relations with Sherman and ordered a ration of whiskey for each of his men — only the second time he'd provided it since the war began.

Many Yankees soldiers gambled with their whiskey until some had accumulated a pint or even a quart. A number of men, gloriously drunk, began making ardent love to women who had worked in the Roswell factories. To provide a separation, one

vere. Union Capt. David P. Conyngham, in a letter home, reported that he was distressed to "witness how the women wept."

Sherman had said it would be fine to let them walk; Garrard was more humane. He assembled about 110 official U.S. Army wagons, each about 10 feet long and able to carry a load of more than a ton.

Writing his "Recollections" decades later, Gen. Dodge was under the impression that the women left the still-smoking town on horseback. According to him, "each member of a regiment of Garrard's cavalry took one of the operatives on his horse, and in this way they were all taken to Marietta."

This wildly implausible account is contradicted by dispatches sent by a New York Tribune reporter, who said he personally saw "the 400 factory girls loaded into 110 wagons."

"Only think of it!" he added. "Four hundred weeping and terrified Ellens, Susans and Maggies transported in the seatless and springless Army wagons, away from their lovers and brothers of the sunny South; and all this for the offense of weaving tent cloth and spinning stocking yarn!"

Gen. George H. Thomas, reporting to Sherman from Marietta by telegram, said, "The Roswell factory hands, 400 or 500 in number, have arrived. Most of them are women. I can only order them transportation to Nashville, where it seems hard to set them adrift. What had best be done with them?"

Tersely, Sherman replied: "I

north of the Ohio river. There are no clear accounts of why the number was then reported at 249 women and children.

Even in the emotional climate of civil war, staunch supporters of the Union and its military leaders questioned Sherman's actions with respect to the Roswell women. "The capture was a novel one in the history of wars," reported the Cincinnati Commercial.

Editors of the New York Commercial Advertiser wrote: "It is hardly conceivable that an officer (Sherman) bearing a U.S. commission of major general should have so far forgotten the commonest dictates of decency and humanity as to drive 400 penniless girls hundreds of miles away from their homes."

No formal justification of Sherman's deportation of the women was ever offered by U.S. officials. Whether his actions were legal, strictly speaking, is moot. Send the women North he did, with or without a defensible explanation for his actions.

More personal — and even more obscure — is the question of what happened to so many women and children. Notice of them in official records ends at Nashville. Were they actually dispersed in Indiana, and if so did they sever all ties with their former existence in Georgia?

By necessity or by choice, some probably remained north of the Ohio river, while others no doubt tried to return home as soon as they could.

Roswell women made up the biggest known body of civilians deported from Georgia, but many other individuals and families were

# Civil War - Genealogy File

Special Collections

## First Volunteer Still Living

**T**HE first volunteer for the civil war is still living. He is Dr. Charles F. Rand of Washington, D. C., retired from active practice by reason of troublesome wounds received more than forty years ago.

A certificate in the capitol of New York State attests the priority of Dr. Rand's tender of his services. This certificate is signed by the mayor and two prominent citizens of Batavia, N. Y., and also by the county clerk and the sheriff of Genesee County, stating that in less than ten minutes after the call for troops by President Lincoln, April 15, 1861, for 75,000 men the name of Charles F. Rand was enrolled as a soldier.

Among the war records at Washington there is none of an earlier enlistment than that of Dr. Rand and the honor has therefore been given him by common consent.

Not only was Dr. Rand the first volunteer for the civil war, but he was also the first soldier to win the congressional medal of honor for distinguished gallantry in action.

This event occurred at Blackburn's Ford, Va., in less than three months after his enlistment. His command was ordered to retreat, and every man obeyed save young Rand, at the time but 18 years of age. The rest of his battalion of 500

men was swept in disorder from the field, but Rand held his ground, despite the fact that the field was ploughed by shot and shell all about him. The enemy finally absolutely refused to fire at the boy standing bravely alone and firing at them as coolly as if he had a regiment at his back. Rand then crept across the field and a deep ravine and joined the command of Gen. A. H. Barnum, remaining with them until the end of the engagement.

The congressional medal of honor was not instituted until a year later, and the first one struck off was presented to Rand for his distinguished gallantry on that memorable day at Blackburn's Ford. During the entire civil war 1,080 medals of honor were distributed among the Union troops for distinguished gallantry in action.

Dr. Rand's patriotism and gallantry have been recognized by two Governors of the State of New York and by three Presidents. He was twice personally honored by President Lincoln; New York State remembered him with a gold medal appropriately inscribed, and the United States Government has presented him with a plot in the most beautiful part of Arlington Cemetery, where, at the proper time, the State of New York will erect a monument worthy of the first man to offer his services.

*John F. ... H. Star ...*